



How to counter waswas



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful





Assalamu'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu,

We pray that this message reaches you
in good health and imaan.

On behalf of our AMAU Academy team, we would like
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prepared to make your journey with us a lot easier.

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If you find any errors or corrections that need
to be made, kindly inform us via our email
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May Allah make our paths toward seeking
beneficial knowledge easy and kindle our hearts
with sincerity and gratefulness
towards Him.

Jazakumullahu Khayran



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جل جلاله | Jalla Jalāluhu
Allah the Most Exalted



صلى الله عليه وسلم | Sallāllāhu Alayhi Wa Sallam
Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him



رضي الله عنه | RadiAllahu `anhu
May Allah be pleased with him

The First Ever Waswasah

Chapter One

Shaytan made a promise:

TO DESTROY THE CHILDREN OF ADAM.

He harbours deep animosity towards us.

This animosity, or ‘Adaawah, stems from the command Allah ﷻ gave him to prostrate to Adam, which he arrogantly and stubbornly refused. This arrogance led to his expulsion from Jannah, and in retaliation, he seeks to misguide us.

Allah ﷻ warned our father Adam about the enmity of Iblees, cautioning him explicitly:

1

... إِنَّ هَذَا عَدُوٌّ لَكَ وَلِزَوْجِكَ فَلَا يُخْرِجَنَّكَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ فَتَشْقَى

... This is surely an enemy to you and to your wife. So do not let him drive you both out of Paradise, for you ‘O Adam’ would then suffer ‘hardship’.

Surah Taha 117

Despite this warning, Adam and Hawwa fell into Shaytan’s trap, and the tactic he used to delude them was waswas—whispering.

1

The First Whisper

The first instance of waswas was the one that led Adam (عليه السلام) to sin. Allah ﷻ recounts in the Quran:

2

أَلَمْ أَنهَيْكُمْ عَنْ تِلْكَ الشَّجَرَةِ وَأَقُلْ لَكُمَا إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمَا عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ

“Did I not forbid you from that tree and ‘did I not’ tell you that Satan is your sworn enemy?”

Surah Al-A'raf 22

This is what Shaytan did. After he was cursed and expelled from Jannah for his disobedience, he used waswas as a strategy to misguide Adam and his spouse, causing them to fall into sin, thereby leading to their expulsion from Jannah.

2

Shaytan’s Vow

Earlier, when Allah ﷻ expelled Shaytan from Jannah and sent His Curse upon him until the Day of Judgement, he (Shaytan) requested Allah ﷻ to allow him to live until the Day of Judgement, so he could continue his mission of misguiding mankind.

When Allah ﷻ gave him what he asked for, he vowed:

3

قَالَ فِيمَا أُغْوَيْتَنِي لَأُقْعِدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ . ثُمَّ لَأَأْتِيَنَّهُمْ مِّنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَنِهِمْ وَعَنْ شَمَائِلِهِمْ ۖ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ

He said, “For leaving me to stray I will lie in ambush for them on Your Straight Path. Then I will come to them from before them and from behind them and on their right and on their left, and You will not find most of them grateful [to You].”

Surah Al-A'raf 16-17

Allah ﷻ responded:

4

قَالَ أَذْهَبَ فَمَنْ تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ فَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ جَزَاءُ مِّمَّوْفُورًا . وَأَسْتَغْزِرُ مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتَ مِنْهُمْ بِصَوْتِكَ وَأَجْلِبْ عَلَيْهِم بِخَيْلِكَ وَرَجِلِكَ وَشَارِكُهُمْ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ وَعِدَّهُمْ ۖ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا . إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَنٌ ۖ وَكَفَى بِرَبِّكَ وَكِيلًا

"Allah said, 'Go, for whoever of them follows you, indeed Hell will be the recompense of you - an ample recompense. And incite whoever you can of them with your voice, mobilise against them all your cavalry and infantry, manipulate them in their wealth and children, and make them promises." But Satan promises them nothing but delusion. 'Allah added,' “You will truly have no authority over My 'faithful' servants.” And sufficient is your Lord as a Guardian.”

Surah Al-Isra 63 - 65

3

The Danger of Waswas

Shaytan promises to misguide the children of Adam by beautifying sins, deceiving them into haram and filth, and commanding them to evil and fahsha (immorality).

A lot of people have fallen into his traps, as Allah ﷻ tells us in the Quran:

5

وَلَقَدْ صَدَّقَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِبْلِيسُ ظَنَّهُ فَاتَّبَعُوهُ إِلَّا فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

Indeed, Iblees' assumption about them has come true, so they 'all' follow him, except a group of 'true' believers.

Surah Saba 20

In the Qur'an, Allah warns us against Iblees in many places:

6

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ

"O mankind, indeed the promise of Allah is true, so let not the worldly life delude you and be not deceived about Allah by the Deceiver."

Surah Fatir 5

Waswas is one of Shaytan’s greatest weapons. For this reason, Allah commanded us to seek His refuge from his whispers:



Say, ‘O Prophet,’ “I seek refuge in the Lord of humankind, the Master of humankind, the God of humankind, from the evil of the lurking whisperer— who whispers into the hearts of humankind— from among jinn and humankind.”

Surah an-Naas 1 - 6

4

Modern Manifestations of Waswas

In contemporary times, waswas manifests in various aspects of life, including ‘Aqeedah (creed), Tahaarah (purity), and even issues like Talaaq (divorce). For instance, some individuals are plagued by doubts about whether they have divorced their spouse or not.

Similarly, during acts of ‘Ibaadah, a person might be afflicted with obsessive thoughts and doubts about whether their prayer was performed correctly.

Another example is that of some people who spend excessive amounts of time in the bathroom or wudu area, unable to perform ablution properly due to overwhelming thoughts.

This severe form of waswas, known as al-Waswas al-Qahri, can be particularly destructive.

Are Waswas a Sign of Imaan?

Chapter Two

WHAT IS WASWAS?

Let us discuss this topic in some detail.

1 Definitions and Types of Waswas

Waswas or **waswasah** refers to thoughts and ideas being brought into one's mind. It refers to self-talk, or Hadith an-Nafs. We all experience talking to ourselves, with thoughts being placed in our hearts. A person who is Muwaswas is someone who has been overcome by such intrusive thoughts.

Waswas can arise from within oneself, as Allah ﷻ told us in the Quran:

1

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

Indeed, 'it is' We 'Who' created humankind and 'fully' know what their souls whisper to them, and We are closer to them than 'their' jugular vein.

Surah Qaf 16

This refers to the whispers of one's own Nafs. Additionally, waswas can also come from Shaytan, who whispers doubts and evil thoughts to the children of Adam.

As Allah ﷻ mentioned in Surah Taha:

2

فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ الشَّيْطَانُ قَالَ يَآ آدَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى شَجَرَةِ الْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَّا يَبْلَى

But Satan whispered to him, saying, "O Adam! Shall I show you the Tree of Immortality and a kingdom that does not fade away?"

Surah Taha 120

The goal of Shaytan's whispers is to place doubt in your religion, your belief in Allah, or in your Messenger ﷺ. However, a believer does not accept the waswas of Shaytan.

2 Accountability and Forgiveness

Allah ﷻ will not hold us accountable for the thoughts that come to our minds, as long as we do not vocalise or act upon them. Allah ﷻ said in the Quran:

3

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَّا آتَتْهَا...

Allāh does not charge a soul except [according to] what He has given it....

Surah At-Talaaq 7

Allah ﷻ also said:

4

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ...

So be mindful of Allah to the best of your ability...

Surah At-Taghabun 16

The Prophet ﷺ said:

5

"إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَجَاوَزَ لِي عَنْ أُمَّتِي مَا وَسَّوَسَتْ بِهِ صُدُورُهَا، مَا لَمْ تَعْمَلْ أَوْ تَكَلِّمْ."

"Allah has accepted my invocation to forgive what whispers in the hearts of my followers, unless they put it to action or utter it."

Sahih al-Bukhari 2528

3

Repelling Waswas

Beware of the fact that Shaytan will try to whisper evil thoughts into your mind about Allah ﷻ, the Messenger ﷺ, or even the Sharee’ah.

As a Muslim, you must naturally hate and repel these thoughts. The fact that you reject these whispers is a sign of Imaan.

Read the following hadith:

6

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ جَاءَ نَاسٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَسَأَلُوهُ إِنَّا نَجِدُ فِي أَنْفُسِنَا مَا يَتَعَاضَمُ أَحَدُنَا أَنْ يَتَكَلَّمَ بِهِ . قَالَ " وَقَدْ وَجَدْتُمُوهُ " . قَالُوا نَعَمْ . قَالَ " ذَاكَ صَرِيحُ الْإِيمَانِ " .

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira that some people from amongst the Companions of the Apostle (ﷺ) came to him and said:

Verily we perceive in our minds that which every one of us considers it too grave to express. He (the Holy Prophet) said: Do you really perceive it? They said: Yes. Upon this he remarked: That is the faith manifest.

Sahih Muslim 132a

Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned that these waswas coming to you and your hatred for them, along with your heart repelling them, is a clear indication of your Imaan. You are like a Mujahid who fights and repels the enemy. This is one of the greatest forms of Jihad and a clear sign of strong Imaan.

Conclusion

Do not think that having waswas indicates something is wrong with you. Al-Khattabi said that the Prophet’s statement “ذَاكَ صَرِيحُ الْإِيمَانِ” means that your heart is rejecting these evil waswas that Shaytan whispers to you. Therefore, do not believe in anything he says to you through such whispers.

Battling Waswas and Shubuhahat

Chapter Three

Now, let us focus on the difference between:

DOUBTS {SHUBUHAT} ... WHISPERS {WASWAS}

1 The One Afflicted With Waswas

The person who experiences waswas is not pleased with the thoughts that come to him. For example, he believes Allah ﷻ exists and that Islam is true, but negative thoughts about Allah and Islam keep coming to him without his desire. If he does not study and seek knowledge, these thoughts might grow.

However, he is not judged nor blamed for these thoughts because they are involuntary, and he deflects them.

2 The One Who Doubts

The person with doubts (shak) is different. He is affected by the doubts, listens to them, and lets his mind dwell on them. He might even consider these doubts logical. This is the key difference between waswas and shubuhahat.

Another point of difference is that a person who falls into doubt might be ignorant of the answers to the doubts that come to him, and so he seeks knowledge to dispel them. He is easily convinced when given the correct response.

However, a Muwaswis, even if he is able to repel one waswasah, will soon be afflicted with another, and then another, and so on. His heart is not content with these whispers, but it is hard for him to get rid of them.

3 Curing Waswas

Strengthening Imaan

The first step to cure waswas is to do things that will strengthen your Imaan. Reading books like "How to Increase Your Imaan" by Sheikh Abdul-Razzaq Al-Badr can be beneficial. The steps mentioned in this particular book can help in increasing one's Imaan.

Du'aa and Adhkar

Reciting dua and adhkar regularly is essential for staying protected from evil whispers.

Ignoring the Thoughts

Do not entertain intrusive thoughts. Eliminate them by not giving them attention.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

1 "يَأْتِي الشَّيْطَانُ أَحَدَكُمْ فَيَقُولُ مَنْ خَلَقَ كَذَا مَنْ خَلَقَ كَذَا حَتَّى يَقُولَ مَنْ خَلَقَ رَبَّكَ فَإِذَا بَلَغَهُ فَلْيَسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ، وَلْيَنْتَهْ.".

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "Satan comes to one of you and says, 'Who created so-and-so? 'till he says, 'Who has created your Lord?' So, when he inspires such a question, one should seek refuge with Allah and give up such thoughts."

Sahih al-Bukhari 3276

Preoccupation with Beneficial Activities

Avoid idleness and preoccupy yourself with beneficial activities. Engage in activities like Qur'an recitation, Salah, upholding kinship ties or spending time with family. Being alone and idle is detrimental and causes more issues related to waswas.

By following these steps, we can protect ourselves from the harmful effects of waswas. May Allah ﷻ uplift these issues from the hearts of Muslims. Ameen.



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